

Testimony of Marie Montpetit, Massack Memorial Residential Care Home

IN OPPOSITION TO

HB 6367- AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS.

Human Services Committee Hearing, Feb. 25, 2013

Senator Slossberg, Representative Abercrombie and members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Marie Montpetit and I am here to testify in opposition to HB 6367, specifically section 9 which caps residential care home rates. I am the owner of the Massack Memorial Home, a nineteen bed Residential Care Home on Davis Avenue in Vernon, CT. My home provides 24 hour a day care and takes care of adult disabled people.

My residents include, but are not limited to, mentally ill people with a variety of mental, physical, and medical impairments such as heart transplant, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, blind, hypertension, deep vein thrombosis, incontinence, and the like. Our home is highly regulated by the State of CT Department of Health as well as the State of CT Fire Safety.

Please be very aware of what we do. The obvious includes preparing meals, snacks, offering some recreation, and supervising and administering medication. We insure residents are bathed, dressed, and we make their various medical appointments and transportation arrangements to a variety of specialist including medical, dental, and psychiatric appointments. Many of our residents are brought by manager to doctors appointments because of their diminished mental capacity.

We are also responsible for the upkeep and safety of the facility and residents. We do regular fire drills, auxiliary light and fire extinguisher checks, water temperature readings. We educate our staff monthly and there is a constant and vigilant check to maintain the safety and cleanliness of our home.

Furthermore, we moderate disputes and grievances for our staff and residential community.

We offer employment opportunities to the community. We hire and maintain a staff of 12 individuals. We administer a small Simple IRA plan, offer Health and Dental insurance. We pay taxes, liability, worker's comp, and property insurance. We do an expensive cost detailed report yearly for the state of CT. All years are audited although never in a timely fashion.

Please realize that the state has cut our costs to the bone; i.e., in over ten years there has been no real wage growth. Capped areas include dietary, laundry, housekeeping, and most recently although required to use a business card such as American Express or Sam's Club, the yearly fees for these cards are no longer recognized as an office expense but are now put in another

capped area of Fees and Dues. Rate of \$2488.69, or \$81.82/day will be reduced to \$2341.78 or \$76.99/day.

I can assure you there is no legitimate way to make any money from Residential Care. You can only expect a wage and health insurance, and perhaps maintenance and improvement of your property.

The four years of frozen rates have forced me to personally finance my business through accessing my personal home equity line and offering personal loans; adding insult to injury, the state does not recognize finance charges. I feel I am personally paying for the disabled citizens of CT and that the state is taking advantage of me and other Residential Care Homes which are providing a tremendous service. I ask that you please uncap residential care home rates. Thank you.